



The Strange Case of MARY PAGE

The Great McClure Mystery Story, Written by
FREDERICK LEWIS in Collaboration With
JOHN T. M'INTYRE, Author of the Ashton
Kirk Detective Stories. Read the Story
and See the Essanay Moving Pictures

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SYNOPSIS

MARY PAGE, an actress, is accused of the murder of James Pollock, and is defended by her lover Philip Langdon. Pollock has been pursuing Mary for many months endeavoring to win her love and her hand in marriage, but his attentions have been very unwelcome to her.

Knowing her stage aspirations, he has, unknown to her, financed her starring tour under the management of Daniels.

On the night of the murder, Mary leaves the banquet hall in the Hotel Republic and enters the Gray Room alone expecting to meet Langdon. She has been lured there by Pollock, who has been drinking.

A few moments later a shot is heard and Langdon and others, upon entering the Gray Room find James Pollock shot through the heart and Mary Page lying in a faint beside him with Pollock's revolver not six inches from the ends of her fingers.

At Mary's trial she admits she had the revolver. Pollock had invaded her dressing room at the theatre, Langdon had come to

her rescue, the revolver had been knocked from Pollock's hand and Mary had seized and retained it. She had put it in her hand bag the night of the murder intending giving it to Langdon.

Her maid testifies that Mary threatened Pollock with it previously, and Mary's leading man implicates Langdon.

How Mary disappeared from the scene of the crime is a mystery. Brandon tells of a strange hand print he saw on Mary's shoulder.

Further evidence shows that horror of drink produces temporary insanity in Mary.

The defense is "repressed psychosis." Witnesses described Mary's flight from her intoxicated father and her father's suicide.

Nurse Walton describes the kidnapping of Mary by Pollock, and Amy Barton tells of Mary's struggles to become an actress, of Pollock's pursuit of her and of another occasion when the smell of liquor drove Mary insane.

There is evidence that Daniels, Mary's manager, threatened Pol-

lock. Mary faints on the stand and again goes insane when a policeman offers her whisky. Daniels testifies that Pollock threatened to kill Mary and Langdon and actually attempted to kill Langdon.

Two witnesses describe Mary's flight to the street from the hotel and her abduction by men from a gambling place near by. Further evidence seems to incriminate Daniels.

Maggie Hale, inmate of a gambling den, testifies that she was at the hotel and heard two men quarrelling in the Gray Room a short time before the murder. Her evidence seems to increase suspicion against Daniels.

Daniels privately informs Langdon that Mary Page did not kill Pollock and that if Mary is in danger of going to the electric chair he will tell all he knows of the case.

Watson, a waiter, testifies that Pollock had a quarrel over the phone the night of the murder, and Pollock's chauffeur reveals the fact that Shale was with Pollock shortly before the shot was fired.

"Call Mr. Daniels."

A sense of something big impending stirred the spectators and the jury alike, and the Judge himself, keenly alive to that new note in Langdon's voice, turned deliberately in his chair as Daniels began his testimony.

Everyone in the room leaned forward, tense with excitement.

"Mr. Daniels," began Langdon with no preliminaries, "on the night of the



"Yes. But I—I—don't remember what happened."

banquet you walked with Miss Page past the door of the gray suite, did you not?"

"I did."

"Did you know that Mr. Pollock was in there?"

"No. But as I passed I heard his voice."

"Could you hear what he said?"

"Yes."

"What was it?"

Langdon was firing his questions like shells from a gun.

"He said, 'Let's understand each other once and for all on this thing. I've got you, and got you good. I can send you up tomorrow if I want to. You've no more chance than a snowball in hell.'"

"Did anyone answer him?"

"Yes. A man said, 'You'll make that threat once too often, James Pollock. I'll make you eat your words at the point of a gun some day.'"

"Then I heard James laugh contemptuously and I had to walk on towards the banquet."

"Did you know whom that other voice belonged to?"

"I thought I did. That's why I left the banquet-room and came back to listen at the door. I was startled

when I heard a loud voice instead of the one I expected."

"Whose voice did you think it was?"

"That of a man named Shale. 'Jim's jackal,' we used to call him."

"Mr. Daniels, do you know of any reason why Mr. Pollock should threaten to send this man Shale 'up'?"

"Well, Pollock told me once that he had 'got the goods' on Shale for some shady work that would easily send him to prison, and that he kept him out of jail because he was useful."

"Mr. Daniels, have you seen Mr. Shale since the death of Mr. Pollock?"

"Yes, I have."

"When?"

"The—the day before I came back home. I ran into him on the street."



"Daniels has snitched. Well he can't prove anything."

We had a talk, and he told me that—he thought he could get me fresh backing for The Corvinton."

"Did he see you again?"

"Yes. A few days ago he came to me and told me that a syndicate had been formed and had raised the money to put on a musical comedy, and that I was to be manager of the theater and look after the financial interests of the syndicate. He was very nice to me."

"Mr. Daniels," Langdon's voice became suddenly grave and freighted with meaning, "did Shale know you had heard his voice in that hotel room?"

"Yes. I asked him if he had been there."

"What did he say?"

"He said I couldn't testify to what I wasn't sure of, and that it was wiser not to ask too many questions."

"Did you understand that the backing for your theatre was in order to keep you from testifying?"

"I object!" cried the district attorney, on his feet in an instant.

There was much wrangling as to whether this question could be admitted; but the Judge finally ruled that it was material evidence.

"It was never put into words, Mr. Langdon, though I gathered it," the witness said. "But there are some bigger things than business success, and I wanted to set this straight."

A sudden commotion arose at the back of the room, and as the spectators turned and stared, and the Judge's gavel rapped for order a man's voice rose shrill and exasperated.

"So that's what you've got me here for, is it? Daniels has snitched. Well he can't prove anything—I tell you he don't know nothin'."

A pallid-faced man in a light-checked suit was struggling in the grip of Brennan and a policeman, who drew him steadily down through the gaping crowds as Langdon called his next witness.

"George Shale."

"I won't testify!" stormed the newcomer, twisting angrily under the by no means light handling of the detectives. "What do you want of me?"

"I shall tell you that when you are on the stand," said Langdon briefly, and his Honor, leaning forward, said sharply:

"A refusal to testify is contempt of court. You can be sent to prison for that."

For a moment Shale stared wildly about, then his eyes narrowed shrewdly, and he said gruffly, "All right," and allowed himself to be led up into the stand.

The excitement of the spectators can be imagined.

Here was drama of the most thrilling kind—an unwilling witness in a sensational murder trial, dragged to the stand, forced to open his sealed lips and tell what he knew.

"Mr. Shale," cried Langdon, "what had James Pollock asked you to do for him on the night when he was shot?"

"He asked me to get him the grey suite at the Republic. He wanted to get Miss Page in there for a quiet chat—so he said."

"Did you do it?"

"Yes. But I was kind of sore, because a man gets tired playin' errand boy for a guy that's dead crazy about a skirt."

"What were you doing on the fire-escape?"

The question came so sharply that it held the whole room tense with its unexpectedness; but Shale did not wince.

"Jim told me to get out there, and keep an eye out for anybody likely to butt in. He knew you could reach the different rooms by it."

"Isn't it true that you and James Pollock quarreled that night?"

Shale blanched.

"Yes, it's true," he said hoarsely.

"Jim was a devil when he was drunk. His face was beaded with perspiration and his hand gripped the edge of the witness stand till the knuckles showed lividly."

He tried to look angry, but he succeeded only in being tragically ridiculous.

Suddenly Langdon softened his voice. "Where were you when Miss Page came into the room?"

"On the fire-escape, standing flattened against the wall, so that anybody looking at the steps wouldn't see me."

"Why did you re-enter the room?"

Shale moistened his dry lips, then with a gust of defiance flung up his head.

"I went in because Jim called me," he said loudly. "The girl had gone hysterical. She was laughin' and shriekin', and he calls to me, 'For God's sake, Shale, see if she's got any smellin' salts or anything in that bag.'"

"And when you opened that bag you found a revolver, didn't you?" Langdon's voice rang out triumphantly.

"George Shale, what did you do with that revolver?"

For a moment the man swayed as he stood, then he laughed and flung his hands wide.

"I shot him with it!" he shrieked. "I shot him! I didn't intend to do it, but he was a dirty dog. He had threatened me again that very night. He struck me—he called me his jackal—and when I saw the gun—I knew my chance had come. I took it out and walked around and said, 'Here's your smellin' salts—' and when he turned to take it I shot him. Oh, my God—"

He broke off with a storm of gasping sobs.

Everyone in the room was on his feet.

Even the Judge had risen.

Mary herself was standing swaying like some lovely lily, the light of a wondrous joy shining in her eyes, while her lips murmured over and over, "Philip—Philip—Philip!"

Then, high above the turmoil rose the voice of the District Attorney:

"George Shale, you are hereby declared under arrest, to be held to await the action of the Grand Jury!"

Again pandemonium broke out but fell to silence when Mary, her eyes drenched with happy tears, cried softly:

"What's to become of me now?"

"Your Honor," Langdon's voice was exultantly happy, and his hand caught and clung to Mary's, "Your Honor, the defendant desires to know what is to become of her?"

"She is discharged," answered his Honor with a smile, and made no effort to stem the cheers that rose, filling the room and echoing far down the corridors proclaiming to the world at large that Mary Page was free!

Still more cheering throngs greeted her when she emerged from the prison a little later with Philip and her mother besides her, and they followed the speeding motor for blocks shouting their acclamations and congratulations, while Mary nestled contentedly against Philip.

Forgotten were the days of horror following the death of Pollock and her arrest for a crime she knew nothing of; forgotten even were the unpleasant moments when Pollock pursued her with manifestations of his unwelcome love.

It was the most wonderful moment of her life.

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"And you never suspected?" she said at last, and Philip shook his head.

"Not Shale," he said. "I was looking for someone else."

"Now don't talk any more about it," said Mrs. Page quietly. "Tomorrow, Mary, I am going to take you back to



Forgotten Were the Days When Pollock Pursued Her With His Unwelcome Love.

the country, and keep you until you have put this dreadful thing out of your mind forever."

"And then," said Mary wistfully, "I will come back and take up my work." Langdon tightened his arm about her.

"And then," said he, "you will come back and marry me. A fee is always paid a lawyer for services rendered. I ask the biggest one, in the world, Mary—will you pay it?"

And what her low-voiced reply was not even her mother knew.

THE END.

Advice.

Advice is a velled but egotistical attempt to show your neighbor how you surpass him intellectually. It is a magnifying glass which you hand to him, after which you make certain that you are standing at the proper focal distance.

Advice is also used as a sugar coating for criticism, as a diplomatic method of checking offensive conduct and as a pastime.

There are two classes of people ebullient with a desire to give advice—those who have had experience and those who have not.

A request for advice is usually a subtle form of flattery or else a method of dodging responsibility.

The person who is wise enough to take good advice and the one who is too wise to give it generally tie the knot of perfect friendship.

Advice is a drug on the market. The principal reason why the supply exceeds the demand is because those who need the most take the least.

Advice should never be followed. If it is good advice it cannot be followed. The only advice which is good is that which drives you.—Judge.

Every One Was Satisfied.

A very angry client entered a New York lawyer's office. He had called upon a debtor and asked him politely to pay a bill of \$250 and had been abused for his pains. Now he wanted the lawyer to collect it.

The lawyer demurred. The bill was so small that it would cost the whole amount to collect it.

"No matter," said the angry one. "I don't care if I don't get a cent as long as that fellow has to pay it!"

So the lawyer wrote the debtor a letter, and in a day or two the latter appeared in high dudgeon. He did not owe any \$250, and he would not pay.

"Very well," said the lawyer; "then my instructions are to sue. But I should hardly think it would pay you to stand a suit for so small a sum."

"Who will get the money if I pay it?" asked the man.

The lawyer was obliged to confess that he should.

"Very well," said the debtor; "that's another matter. If Smith isn't going to get it I am perfectly willing to pay it."—Youth's Companion.

Chinese Schools.

Each Chinese schoolboy has to furnish his own stool and table for school work as well as the "four precious articles," which are the ink slab, a cake of India ink, a brush for writing and paper. With these he begins his weary task of learning to write and read the thousands of Chinese characters.

These are to open the way to the Chinese classics, and a knowledge of this ancient literature and wisdom means education to the Chinese.

At the opening of a Chinese school a paper on which is written the name of the ancient Chinese sage, Confucius, is pasted on the wall. Before this honored name the pupils and masters burn paper money and incense and bow their heads three times to the floor.

The master then tells Confucius the day, the month and the year the school is opened and begs for his favor. Every morning when the pupils arrive they must bow twice, once to the master and once for Confucius.

Proved It.

"Whenever I see Griffiths I am reminded that the good die young," said a business man the day.

"But Griffiths is over seventy," said his friend.

"Exactly," was the reply. "That is just my point."—Chicago Herald.

CONFESSION

WITH his hands clasped behind his back and his brows bent in a frown that made him look oddly old and tired, Langdon paced slowly up and down. Over and over in his mind he went back through the testimony of the long trial of Mary Page. He was confident now, as he had not been confident in the beginning, that she had not shot James Pollock in a frenzy of delirious fear.

But who HAD killed him? That was the problem! Never in all his experience had he remembered so baffling a case.

At least a half dozen times he had felt that his fingers were at last upon



But Who HAD Killed Him?

the right thread that would lead out of the maze, but each time his edifice of hope had crumbled.

The doorman at the Hotel Republic had repeated only what the chauffeur had already told—that Shale had left Pollock as soon as he got out of the machine; but even so Langdon had sent Brennan and his conferees to scour the town for him.

He ought not to be hard to find; but, once found, could he tell anything? That was the question.

And so, wearily and endlessly, Langdon paced the stone-paved room, dou-

bly ugly in the clear light of the early morning.

Suddenly he was halted in his self imposed sentry duty by the sound of a knock on the door, and in response to his "come in," Daniels entered.

"I looked for you over at the office," he said, "but they told me you were here."

"Did you want me for anything special?" asked Langdon coldly, and the theatrical man flushed.

"Yes," he said, "I did. I had a long talk with my wife last night, and she and I decided that the hoodoo on The Covington is too black for us, anyway. No good can come out of that place for me, and she—she said, she wanted me to come down here and ask you to put me on the stand again. Do you understand what I mean?"

"I think I do," said Langdon quietly, though a flame had leaped into his eyes. "You want to tell what you didn't say before?"

He was too clever to let this man know how jubilant he was.

"Yes," said Daniels. "It may not be important, yet somehow I know it is. It's about what I heard when I passed the door of the gray suite that night."

"Thank God!" cried Langdon, and drew his chair close to that of Daniels.

When they entered the courtroom together an hour later every trace of anxiety and suffering had been wiped from Langdon's face.

He looked buoyantly young, and when he passed Mary, he whispered something to her that brought a light to her eyes too, and though there was surprise there was no fear on her face when she herself was called as the first witness of the day.

"Miss Page," said Langdon in the vibrantly happy voice of one who sees success just ahead, "on the night when you went into the gray suite from the banquet room were you wearing or carrying your cloak?"

"I slipped it on as I came into the hall. I carried my gloves and my evening bag."

"Did you see Mr. Pollock the minute you entered the room?"

"No."

"What did you do?"

"I slipped off the cloak again because it was warm and laid it on a chair with my gloves and bag."

"Where was that chair?"

The question snapped like a whip lash, and for a moment Mary hesitated.

"I'm not quite sure," she said slowly; then, with more assurance: "Why, yes, I am! It was towards the door into the other room because it was then that I saw Mr. Pollock come out."

"And you retreated?"

"Yes." The answer was breathed rather than spoken, but Langdon pushed on, too eager to spare her.

"Did he come toward you?"

"Yes."

"Did he follow you so far that he came between you and that chair?"

"Why, of course. He—he—came right up to me."

She shuddered and hid her face in her hands, as the tide of recollection swept over her, but Langdon had only one more question.

"Then, in order to secure the revolver from your bag, you would have had to push past him and secure the bag from under your cloak, would you not?"

"Yes. But I—I—don't remember what happened."

"That is all, thank you, Miss Page," said Langdon, and turning to the bailiff he added briskly: